

Monitoring Report 2022/2023

issued by Stiftung Kinder forschen (Little Scientists Foundation)



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The educational initiative in it is own words

Who is behind the educational initiative?

Germany's biggest <u>educational initiative</u> for early childhood educators, teachers and leaders at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools (hereafter: educators) includes all those who are actively committed to the idea of Stiftung Kinder forschen (Little Scientists Foundation, <u>previously: Haus der kleinen Forscher</u>), in particular the employees of Stiftung Kinder forschen, local network partners and all those involved in putting the initiative into practice.

What does the educational initiative Stiftung Kinder forschen (Little Scientists Foundation) offer?

It provides educators with practical suggestions and access to Continuing Professional Development (CPD), both online and on site. They receive support in implementing exploration-based and inquiry-based learning with children in their day-to-day teaching.

How do the educational initiative's offerings reach teachers?

<u>Local network partners</u> offer regional CPD workshops for educators through their trainers. The programme is supplemented with the Foundation's online CPD workshops on the learning platform <u>Campus</u>.

What are the educational initiative's thematic priorities?

The educational initiative enables children at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools throughout Germany to explore science, technology, engineering, mathematics and sustainability on a day-to-day basis: STEM education for sustainable development.

STEM = science, technology, engineering, mathematics **ESD** = education for sustainable development

What pedagogical approach does the educational initiative use?

It is the girls and boys that themselves that set the tone. The <u>pedagogical</u> <u>approach</u> of explorative and inquiry-based learning starts with the <u>children's own</u> <u>interests and abilities</u>, focusing on joint <u>engagement in activities with educators</u>.

Subject of the report

Day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools are going through difficult times: the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, organising the intake of refugee children, the shortage of qualified educators and the high levels of staff turnover – the list of challenges facing educational institutions is long. High workloads and staff shortages mean that attendance at CPD workshops has to be strongly prioritised.

Schieler (2023)

Against this backdrop, the Foundation's internal monitoring and evaluation measures in the reporting period of the two years 2022 and 2023 focused on the extent to which the various offerings are known about and used, which criteria play a role in the selection of a CPD workshop and what a CPD workshop might look like that educators like to use frequently in spite of the challenging situation at the institutions. This focus is reflected in this report (Awareness, fit and uptake of CPD offerings). In addition, further selected data and key findings from 2022 and 2023 are reported based on a simplified impact chain pursued by the educational initiative.

The monitoring data and survey results presented relate mainly to educators at day-care centres. Wherever there are differences between the areas of the day-care centre and the primary school, these are addressed separately.



How the educational initiative takes effect

The vision: all children in Germany experience places of learning where they can pursue their own questions and discover the world through inquiry-based learning.

In order to ensure that the educational initiative's activities achieve the desired objectives, it pursues an impact-oriented approach. This means that its activities are geared towards the needs of the target groups and the offerings are designed to bring about certain changes in these target groups. An impact chain (see below) can be used to illustrate and analyse the extent to which the educational initiative's resources and activities are achieving the intended impact and where adjustments need to be made.













Use of resources

The Foundation, local network partners and supporters jointly invest their working hours. financial resources and infrastructure.

Development and provision of the **CPD** offerings

The Foundation designs and produces wellfounded CPD workshops, pedagogical resources and other offerings on STEM topics and ESD. It qualifies trainers in the fields of STEM education, ESD and adult education. CPD workshops are provided jointly by network partners and the Foundation.

Awareness, fit and uptake of **CPD** offerings

Educators throughout Germany are familiar with the Foundation's CPD offerings. These are designed to meet their needs. Educators make use of the workshops.







Satisfaction with the **CPD** offerings and perceived added value

Educators are satisfied with the CPD offerings. The latter offer added value for the educators' pedagogical work and suggestions for practical implementation.

Changes resulting from use of **CPD** offerings

Educators expand their skills and pedagogical strategies. They engage in exploration-based and inquiry-based activities together with the children at their institutions. In this way, educators pursue what they have learnt in greater depth and share their insights with colleagues. Leaders support these processes.

Summary of the findings for 2022/2023



Use of resources

The work of the educational in 2022/initiative is carried out by 230 Stiftung Kinder for eductional for schen employees, 297 coordinators and 412 trainers

The Foundation and its network partners finance the work of the educational initiative from various sources



Development and provision of the CPD offerings

In 2022/2023, 18 CPD workshops were developed for educators in various formats with scientific accompaniment

In 2022/2023 the Foundation provided initial or further qualification for 331 trainers in 39 different programmes

The educational initiative's offerings are available to 84 % of day-care centres



Awareness, fit and uptake of CPD offerings

Three out of four day-care centre staff are aware of the educational initiative, even if they have not yet made use of any of the offerings

Certification and pedagogical resources are very well known among educators at day-care centres who have not attended CPD workshops offered by the educational initiative

Educators at day-care centres primarily become aware of the educational initiative's offerings through the institution leadership and their colleagues



Satisfaction with the CPD offerings and perceived added value

Participating educators at day-care centres are **very satisfied** with all the CPD offerings

The high degree of practical relevance of the CPD offerings meets the expectations of educators at day-care centres

Educators at day-care centres are interested in attending further CPD workshops and the vast majority of them recommend their colleagues attend CPD workshops



Changes resulting from use of CPD offerings

By attending a CPD workshop, educators at day-care centres expand their skills, reflect on their convictions and learn new strategies for action

Educators share content and pedagogical resources from CPD workshops they have attended with their team at day-care centres

CPD topics that offer current relevance are more likely to be integrated in day-to-day pedagogical work at day-care centres

Participation and
co-operation between
different actors at and
associated with day-care
centres is a factor that
promotes the transfer of
knowledge after attendance
at a CPD workshop and
implementation in practice

For educators at day-care centres, the **relevance of the topic** to their pedagogical work is the **most important criterion** for attending a CPD workshop

Educators at day-care centres need **more time** to be able to take advantage of CPD workshop offerings

Face-to-face workshops are most popular with educators at day-care centres

The network partners and the Foundation increasingly offer in-house CPD workshops for day-care centres

Use of resources













Stiftung Kinder forschen has its operational headquarters in Berlin. In addition, the Foundation's work is supported by the members of the Foundation Board, the Board of Trustees and the Scientific Advisory Board. The coordinators and trainers are involved in the 194 local networks throughout Germany (as of 31 December 2023).

The Foundation and its network partners finance the work of the educational initiative from various sources

Stiftung Kinder forschen <u>is financed</u> through institutional funding provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), funds from partner foundations and project-related funding. Other donors support selected Foundation projects or activities over a fixed period of time.

More on how the Foundation operates in the <u>Annual Report</u> Network partners finance their work for the educational initiative from funds provided by their respective organisations and with the help of other powerful partners and supporters in their regions.



Development and provision of CPD offerings











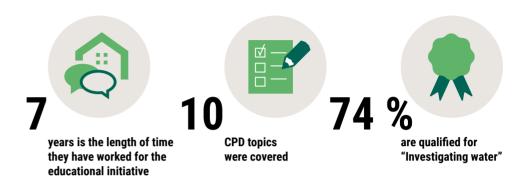
In 2022/2023, 18 CPD offerings were developed for educators in various formats with scientific accompaniment

The extensive CPD programme with a focus on STEM education and ESD includes CPD workshops and courses in various formats as well as a wide range of pedagogical resources which are improved and expanded on an ongoing basis. When creating its offerings, the Foundation draws on both needs assessments and a scientific basis, using findings from internal and external evaluations as well as studies on the impact of its offerings in order to ensure high-quality CPD.

New offerings in 2022/2023:

- two regional CPD workshops: Open the doors! Our path towards sustainable development (in-house CPD workshop for the entire day-care centre team) and City, countryside, forest – Exploring and helping to shape living spaces
- a conference Digital detectives exploring the world of data with children
- 15 online courses and webinars, e.g. Children's participation

In 2022/2023 the Foundation provided initial or further qualification for 331 trainers in 39 different programmes



Stiftung Kinder forschen participation and contact database (ongoing)

The educational initiative's offerings are available to 84 % of day-care centres

The figure is 90 % for after-school centres and 77 % for primary schools. Local network partners and their trainers are the most important contacts for educators on site. The Foundation supports network partners by providing qualification programmes and services to attract and retain programme users in their respective regions.

The Foundation also raises social awareness of the importance of early STEM education for sustainable development, ensuring educators are aware of the CPD offerings and are able to make use of them. In addition, the Foundation is involved in dialogue at the level of society and policymakers (also at the <u>international</u> level) with the aim of promoting decisions that favour high-quality early STEM education for sustainable development.

Stiftung Kinder forschen participation and contact database (ongoing)

Awareness, fit and uptake of the CPD offerings







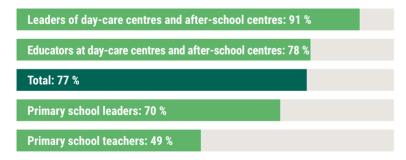




Three out of four day-care centre staff are aware of the educational initiative, even if they have not yet made use of any of the offerings

The initiative is even better known (91 % in each case) among day-care centre and after-school centre leaders who have not yet attended the educational initiative's CPD workshops than among early childhood educators and teachers.

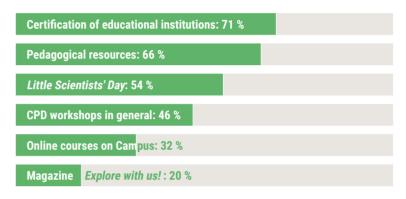
How well-known is the educational initiative?



Survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022)

Certification and pedagogical resources are very well known among educators at day-care centres who have not attended a CPD workshop offered by the educational initiative

Which offerings are known?



Survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022)

29 % of teachers without experience of attending a CPD workshop even state that they have already used pedagogical resources. By contrast, the CPD workshops organised by the educational initiative are somewhat less well known. Among educators who have not yet attended a CPD workshop organised by Stiftung Kinder forschen, only one in five are aware of a local training provider in their area (network partner of the educational initiative). Educators at day-care centres surveyed who had already made use of the Foundation's programmes were significantly more likely to be familiar with the full range of its offerings – especially the CPD workshops (90 %).

Educators at day-care centres primarily become aware of the educational initiative's offerings through the institution leadership and their colleagues

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

How did the participants become aware of the CPD programme?



For educators at day-care centres, the relevance of the topic to their pedagogical work is the most important criterion for attending a CPD workshop

The challenge of finding time to attend a CPD workshop in the current situation is understandably a key factor, too. Furthermore, the offerings have to be suited to the age of the children in question. The general arrangements (including a suitable date and an easily and quickly accessible location) are also important criteria for educators when it comes to attending a CPD workshop. By contrast, the cost of attending a workshop is less of a deciding factor.

Survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022)



Educators at day-care centres need more time to be able to take advantage of CPD workshops

For around 80 % of the educators surveyed, unfavourable general arrangements at the institutions are the biggest obstacle to attending a CPD workshop. In interviews, almost one in three people surveyed at day-care centres stated that they were currently only able to attend fewer CPD workshops than desired or none at all due to a lack of staff or time at their institution. This also has an impact on CPD in the field of STEM education for sustainable development – according to the educators surveyed, the current challenges mean that topics such as basic language skills, digitalisation and child protection are currently being prioritised.

Survey on target group loyalty (2022)

Face-to-face workshops are most popular with educators at day-care centres



Survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022)

In past surveys, educators at day-care centres who previously attended workshops offered by Stiftung Kinder forschen have also expressed a preference for face-to-face courses – whether in-house or at the training provider's premises. Of the educators at day-care centres who had not yet attended a workshop given by the educational initiative, only one in three would like to attend an online workshop. Network partners say that although the level of satisfaction among educators is similar with regard to online CPD workshops as it is with regard to face-to-face workshops, many view the online offerings during the pandemic more as a necessary alternative to face-to-face formats.

Survey on CPD uptake (2021), survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022), survey of network partners (2022)

The network partners and the Foundation increasingly offer in-house CPD workshops for day-care centres

Many network partners took the needs of educators into account and increasingly focussed on face-to-face formats again when planning CPD workshops for 2022 and 2023. Almost one in two network partners state that they organise in-house CPD workshops. Network partners are able to offer the Foundation's entire CPD programme on an in-house basis. Since the beginning of 2023, trainers have been provided with the relevant profile training by the Foundation so as to qualify them to implement in-house CPD workshops.

Survey of network partners (2022)

Participation in the CPD programme

Status: 31 December 2023

Participation in the CPD programme:



approx. 29,000

early childhood
education and
care centres

approx. 1,800

approx. 5,600 primary schools

Certified by Stiftung Kinder forschen:



approx. 5,600
early childhood education and

care centres

approx. 200

after-school centres

approx. 300 primary schools

Educators who have undergone CPD:



approx. **75,000**

approx. **4,000**

approx. 10,000

at day-care centres

at after-school centres

at primary schools

Children at participating institutions:



approx. 1.9 million

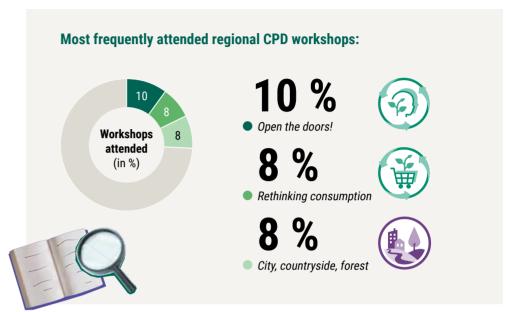
approx. 200,000 at after-school centres

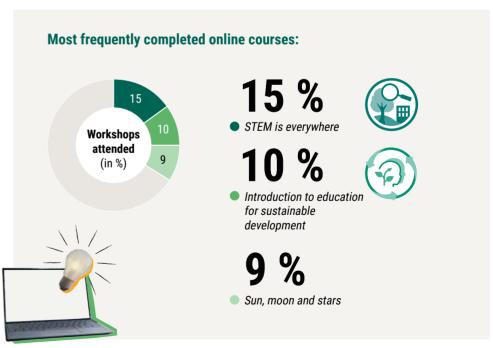
approx. 1 million

Stiftung Kinder forschen participation and contact database (ongoing)

Most frequently used offerings 2022/2023

Status: 31 December 2023





Stiftung Kinder forschen participation and contact database (ongoing)

Satisfaction with the CPD offerings and perceived added value









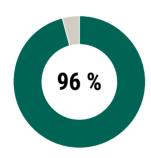


Participating educators at day-care centres are very satisfied with all the CPD offerings

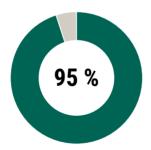
Satisfaction among participants of all CPD offerings with







Sequence and structure



Opportunities for dialogue

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

The high level of participant satisfaction is consistently evident across various event formats. Those who attended regional CPD workshops are more satisfied with the opportunities for dialogue than those who took part in the moderated online courses (96 % vs. 84 %).

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

The high degree of practical relevance of the CPD offerings meets the expectations of educators at day-care centres

By participating in an online programme on the learning platform Campus, educators expect above all to receive suggestions/ideas for their educational practice (75 %) and to expand their own knowledge (71 %). 89 % of participants stated that their participation in an online course had met their expectations.

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

In interviews, all of the educators surveyed at day-care centres expressed their appreciation of the interactive structure and high practical relevance of the regional CPD workshops. Points of criticism such as difficulties with planning or registration are only mentioned occasionally.

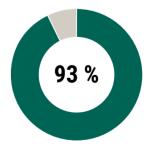
Survey on target group loyalty (2022)

Based on the example of the new CPD workshop *City, countryside, forest*: 91 % of participants know how to use the pedagogical resources after attending the workshop and 75 % know which idea they would like to start with when introducing the topic to children at their institution. Almost all of the educators surveyed see added value in attending the workshop in terms of their own pedagogical work (92 %).

Evaluation of City, countryside, forest (2022/2023)

Educators at day-care centres are interested in attending further CPD workshops and the vast majority of them recommend their colleagues attend CPD workshops

Almost all of the educators surveyed can well imagine either themselves or a team member attending a CPD workshop again, providing overall conditions allow it. If teachers no longer wish to attend a CPD workshop, it is mainly because their professional role has changed and they are doing less pedagogical work. In this case, they transfer training attendance to colleagues.



recommend attending a CPD workshop

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

Survey on target group loyalty (2022)

Changes resulting from use of CPD offerings











By attending a CPD workshop, educators at day-care centres expand their skills, reflect on their convictions and learn new strategies for action

Based on the example of the new CPD workshop *City, countryside, forest*: Participants gain specialist knowledge about exploring, investigating and actively shaping living spaces (before 14 %, after 74 %) and expand their subject-specific pedagogical knowledge about how to involve children in active participatory projects (before 54 %, after 64 %). Most of the educators surveyed had implemented programme content with children within six months of attending the workshop (82 %).

Evaluation of City, countryside, forest (2022/2023)



The most important insight gained from the CPD workshop:

"How versatile the topic is and the fact that you can approach it from lots of different angles at the day-care centre."

Evaluation of Rethinking consumption (2021/2022)

Educators share content and pedagogical resources from CPD workshops they have attended with the team at their day-care centre

In connection with the *City, countryside, forest* programme, all of the educators surveyed exchanged information about the content of the CPD workshop at their institution (100 %) and almost all of them shared pedagogical resources with colleagues at their own institution (91 %). The first time CPD content is addressed outside of the workshop is usually at team meetings. Here, educators report back to their team on the workshop and the pedagogical resources they have received; together with their colleagues, they look for points of reference in their day-to-day pedagogical work at the institution. Due to limited time, teachers often focus on specific practically oriented ideas within the resource package.

Evaluation of City, countryside, forest (2022/2023), study on the use of pedagogical resources ESD (2022)

CPD topics that offer current relevance are more likely to be integrated in day-to-day pedagogical work at day-care centres

After sharing ideas, the teams at the institutions explore different approaches to implementing workshop content. The better the workshop content matches topics of current relevance at the institution (e.g. with seasonal relevance), the more likely it is to be implemented – in the form of projects or as a basis for structural changes at the institutions. These include adapting the range of toys provided or taking a more conscious approach to food.

Study on the use of pedagogical resources ESD (2022), evaluation of *Rethinking* consumption (2021/2022)



have implemented changes at their institution, e.g. for upcycling and recycling or waste separation

Evaluation of *Rethinking consumption* (2021/2022)

Two new programmes were evaluated longitudinally during the reporting period.



The Foundation evaluated its CPD programme from 2018 to 2022 by conducting a longitudinal survey of some 1,500 educators. This and other impact studies have provided numerous indications of changes resulting from use of CPD offerings.

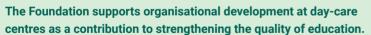
The results are available here: <u>Monitoring Report 2020/2021</u>, <u>Monitoring Report 2018/2019</u>, academic publication series (<u>volume 10</u>, <u>volume 13</u>).

Participation and cooperation between different actors at and associated with day-care centres is a factor that promotes the transfer of knowledge after attendance at a CPD workshop and implementation in practice

What features characterise a day-care centre where practical transfer is very successful? The results of various studies conducted by the educational initiative show the ideal image of such an institution:

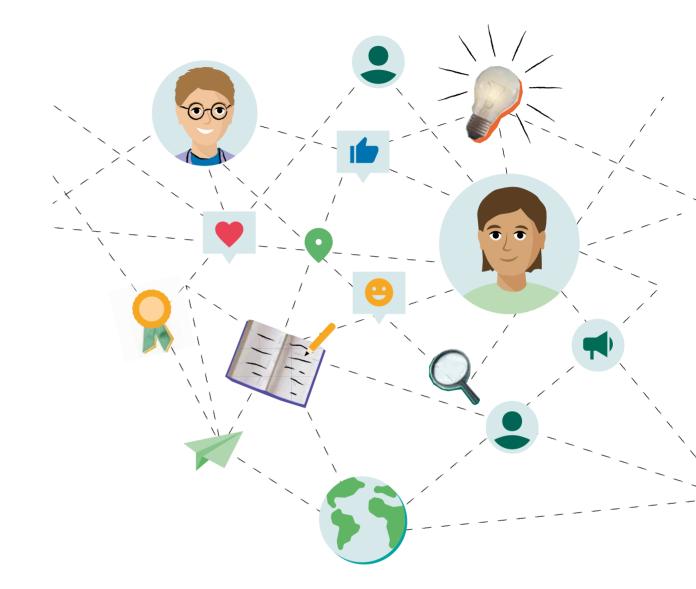
Together with the educator who has attended the workshop, the leader of the institution takes responsibility for passing on knowledge while at the same time ensuring that the team works in a transparent and participatory manner. The programme content is incorporated into team meetings and leaders provide the necessary pedagogical resources for subsequent implementation on a day-to-day basis. It is essential for the leaders and the team to be open to innovation. Team members support each other in trying out new educational methods and there is a high level of mutual trust. The leader also ensures that team members can regularly discuss what they have tried and tested while also reflecting on their experience. Providers offer support by ensuring there are suitable structures for dialogue and cooperation and by promoting a culture of mutual learning. Transfer processes also benefit from the support of specialist consultations and the overall involvement of other stakeholders such as parents.

Ulber & Hogrebe (in preparation), evaluation of Rethinking consumption (2021/2022)



The existing and planned offerings for day-care centre development range from low-threshold introductory offerings and various further CPD workshops to one-year intensive programmes (projects <u>KiQ – improving day-care centre quality together, Day-care centre development: input for practical implementation, Education for sustainable development</u>).

To find out more about how the day-care centre programmes are conceived and the results of the scientific accompaniment, see volumes 14, 15 and 18 of the <u>academic publication series</u>.





"The fact that so many educators are aware of and appreciate our programmes is something I'm really pleased about. The next step is to further facilitate and simplify the use of these offerings and also tie them in even more closely with currently relevant educational topics."

Dr. Tobias Ernst, Chairperson of the Executive Board of Stiftung Kinder forschen

Conclusion and look ahead

The findings obtained in 2022/2023 clearly indicate that the educational initiative is very well known among educators and there is interest in making use of its offerings. Where educators have made use of the offerings, they are very satisfied with them and changes have been initiated. However, conditions at the institutions frequently do not favour attendance at CPD workshops, making it difficult for many educators to make regular use of the programme at the present time.

The Foundation sees itself as a learning organisation that attaches importance to developing needs-based and effective offerings while maintaining an awareness of the challenges faced by educators. In view of this, the educational initiative will increasingly focus on making it easier for educators to make use of its offerings such as by offering suitable dates and easily accessible locations, and also by organising more in-house CPD workshops. In addition, the Foundation is developing new, shorter impetus workshops and explorative programme formats that can be easily integrated in the challenging day-to-day routine of an institution and in addition to providing STEM link, are also more closely tied in with currently relevant educational topics (e.g. language education). In future, one focus of the scientific accompaniment of the Foundation's work will therefore be on matching the needs of educators with the educational initiative's offerings, also taking into account channels of distribution and accessibility.

In this way, educators will continue to experience added value for their pedagogical work through a needs-based, impact-oriented CPD programme dedicated to exploration-based and inquiry-based learning and receive support at their institutions in providing children with places of learning that make them strong for the future and enable them to act responsibly.

List of sources

Data collected by the Foundation and its research partners

under the direction of the Research and Quality Management Department of Stiftung Kinder forschen

Survey of Berlin day-care centre leaders (2022)

Quantitative online survey of leaders of day-care centres in Berlin (N=203), conducted 06/2022, focus areas: CPD behaviour and barriers to participation, factors that influence the selection of CPD workshops, needs and wishes with regard to CPD workshops, in collaboration with: Senate Department for Education, Youth and Families. Berlin

Survey of network partners (2022)

Quantitative online survey of Stiftung Kinder forschen network partners (N=203), conducted 06/2022, focus areas: workshop planning and implementation, conditions for successful networking

Survey of educators who have no experience of attending a CPD workshop given by the educational initiative (2022) Quantitative telephone survey of educators at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools who have not yet used any of the educational initiative's offerings (N=467), surveyed 12/2022, focus areas: awareness of the educational initiative, needs and interests with regard to CPD, research partner: uzbonn – Gesellschaft für empirische Sozialforschung und Evaluation

Survey on the Little Scientists' Day (2023)

Quantitative telephone survey of educators, teachers and leaders at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools (N=654), conducted 06-07/2023, focus areas: awareness of, participation in and experience of the *Little Scientists' Day*, reasons for non-participation and circumstances of participation, research partner: uzbonn – Gesellschaft für empirische Sozialforschung und Evaluation

Survey on attendance at CPD workshops (2021)

Quantitative telephone survey of educators and leaders at day-care centres and after-school centres (N=509) and quantitative online survey of teachers at primary schools (N=188), surveyed 10-12/2021, focus areas: use of CPD and continuing CPD workshops before, during and planning after the corona pandemic, research partner: uzbonn – Gesellschaft für empirische Sozialforschung und Evaluation

Survey on target group loyalty (2022)

Qualitative telephone survey of educators, teachers and leaders at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools who last used an educational initiative offering before 2019 (N=31), surveyed 09-10/2022, focus areas: awareness of the educational initiative, reasons for non-

participation, needs with regard to renewed participation, procedure for choosing CPD workshops, research partner: uzbonn – Gesellschaft für empirische Sozialforschung und Evaluation

Evaluation of *Rethinking consumption* (2021/2022)

Quantitative paper and online survey of educators and teachers at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools on a longitudinal basis at three points in time (before and directly after the workshop: N=148, six months later, n=36), surveyed 03/2021-08/2022, focus areas: satisfaction, skills development, implementation of programme content

Evaluation of *City, countryside, forest* (2022/2023)

Quantitative online survey of educators, teachers and leaders at day-care centres, after-school centres and primary schools on a longitudinal basis at three points in time (before and after the workshop: N=95, six months later: n=11), surveyed 11/2022-05/2023, focus areas: circumstances of workshop attendance, satisfaction, skills development, implementation of the programme content

Feedback on the CPD programme (2022/2023)

Feedback after attendance at a regional CPD workshop (N=9,402) or use of an online offering on the learning platform Campus (N=6,759), continuously surveyed, period under review: 01/2022–12/2023, focus areas: expectations, organisation or online environment, sequence and structure, CPD management or moderation, implementation and transfer, information channels

ESD study on the use of pedagogical resources (2022)

Qualitative telephone survey of educators at day-care centres (N=10), conducted 12/2022, focus areas: transfer of programme content, perception and use of ESD resources, research partner: uzbonn – Gesellschaft für empirische Sozialforschung und Evaluation

Stiftung Kinder forschen participation and contact database (ongoing)

Key figures on the number of active trainers and institutions, collected on an ongoing basis, period under review: 01/2022–12/2023

Further sources

Schieler, A. (2023). DKLK-Studie 2023. Themenschwerpunkt: Personalmangel in Kitas im Fokus. Hamburg, Berlin: FLEET Education Events & Verband Bildung und Erziehung e. V.

Ulber, D. & Hogrebe, N. (in preparation). *Transfer ins Team: Evaluation eines entwicklungs-orientierten Unterstützungstools für Kindertageseinrichtungen im Kontext (T²E²K²)*. In Stiftung Kinder forschen (ed.), *Kita-Entwicklung*, *Verstehen*, *Vernetzen*, *Verändern (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zur Arbeit der Stiftung Kinder forschen*, volume 18), Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich.

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